Anaximander's Saying

It is considered to be the oldest saying of Western thinking. Anaximander is said to have lived on the island of Samos from the end of the seventh century until the middle of the sixth.

According to the generally accepted text the fragment reads:

ἐξ ὧν δὲ ἡ γένεσίς ἐστι τοῖς οὖσι καὶ τὴν φθορὰν εἰς ταῦτα γίνεσθαι κατὰ τὸ χρεών· διδόναι γὰρ αὐτὰ δίκην καὶ τίσιν ἀλλήλοις τῆς ἀδικίας κατὰ τὴν τοῦ χρόνου τάξιν.

Whence things have their coming into being there they must also perish according to necessity; for they must pay a penalty and be judged for their injustice, according to the ordinance of time.

Thus the youthful Nietzsche's translation in his treatise of 1873 entitled "Philosophy in the Tragic Age of the Greeks." This treatise was first published posthumously in 1903, thirty years after its composition. It is based on a lecture course Nietzsche had given several times in Basle in the early 1870s under the title "The Pre-Platonic Philosophers with Interpretation of Selected Fragments."

In the same year, 1903, in which Nietzsche's treatise first became publicly available, Hermann Diels' *Pre Socratic Fragments* [*Fragmente der Vorsokratiker*] appeared. It contained texts critically established according to the methods of modern classical philology, together with a translation. The work is dedicated to Wilhelm Dilthey. Diels translates Anaximander's saying as follows:

But where things derive their coming into being, there their passing away also occurs according to necessity; for they pay each other punishment and penalty for their dastardliness according to firmly established time.

The translations of Nietzsche and Diels arise from different impulses and intentions. Nonetheless they are hardly distinguishable. Diels' translation is in many respects the more literal. But if a translation is merely literal it cannot be assumed to be faithful. It only becomes faithful when its words are words that speak out of the language of the matter.

More important than the general agreement of the two translations is the conception of Anaximander which underlies them. Nietzsche takes him to belong to the pre-Platonics, Diels to the pre-Socratics. Both designations say the same. The implicit standard for explicating and judging the early thinkers is the philosophy of Plato and Aristotle. Both are taken as the philosophers of the Greeks who set the standard both before and after themselves. This perception, *via* Christian theology, has established itself as a general conviction that, to this very day, remains unshaken. Even where, in the meantime, philological and historical research has occupied itself more thoroughly with the philosophers before Plato and Aristotle, their interpretation is still guided by modern versions of Platonic and Aristotelian representations and concepts. This is even the case where one seeks to discover the archaic in early thinking by looking for parallels in classical archeology and literary history. It remains within classical and classicistic representations. One speaks of archaic logic heedless of the fact that such a thing as logic exists for the first time within the Platonic and Aristotelian curriculum.

Merely ignoring later representations leads nowhere unless we, first of all, look to how it stands with the matter which, in the translation from one language to another, is to be translated. The matter here, however, is the matter of thought. Granted that in translation we must take every care to attend to the philologically clarified language, first and foremost, nonetheless, we must think about the matter itself. Hence only the thinkers can help us in the attempt to translate the saying of this early thinker. When, however, we cast about for such help we search in vain.

The young Nietzsche does indeed, in his own way, establish a lively relationship to the personality of the pre-Platonic philosophers, but his interpretation of the texts are thoroughly commonplace, even quite superficial. The only Western thinker who has thoughtfully experienced the history of thought is Hegel. Yet even he has nothing to say about Anaximander's saying. Moreover, Hegel, too, shares the prevalent conviction concerning the classical character of Platonic and Aristotelian philosophy. He endorses the view which classifies the early thinkers as the "pre-Platonics" and "pre-Socratics" precisely through grasping them as the "pre-Aristotelians."

In his lectures on the history of Greek philosophy, at the point where he comes to speak about the sources for our knowledge of the oldest epoch of philosophy, Hegel says the following:

> Aristotle is the richest source. He made a thorough study of, in particular, the oldest philosophers. At the beginning of his *Metaphysics* (but in many other places too) he speaks of them in a systematically historical way. He is as philosophical as he is scholarly; we can rely on him. For Greek philosophy we can do nothing better than get to work on the first book of his *Metaphysics*.
>
> (*Werke*, vol. XIII, p. 189)

What Hegel recommends, here, to his listeners in the first decades of the nineteenth century was practiced, in Aristotle's own time, by Theophrastus, his pupil and immediate successor as leader of the Peripatetics. Theophrastus died in 286 BC. He composed a text with the title Φυσικῶν δοξαι, "The Opinions of Those Who Speak of φύσει ὀντα." Aristotle also calls them the φυσιολόγοι, meaning the early thinkers who discuss the things of nature. Φύσις means sky and earth, plants and animals, and in a certain sense, human beings as well. The word designates a special region of beings which, in Aristotle and in the School of Plato in general, is separated from ἦθος and λόγος. For them Φύσις no longer has the wider meaning of the totality of beings. From the beginning of Aristotle's thematic observations in the *Physics*, the kind of being called φυσει ὀντα is contrasted with that of τέχνῃ ὄντα. The former is that which brings itself forth by arising out of itself, the latter is that which is brought forth through human planning and production.

Hegel's remark that Aristotle is as philosophical as he is scholarly means the following: that Aristotle sees the early thinkers from the historical perspective of his *Physics*. For us this means that Hegel understood the pre-Platonic and pre-Socratic philosophers as the pre-Aristotelians. After Hegel, two positions within the general view of philosophy before Aristotle and Plato became firmly established. (1) In their search for the first origins of beings the early thinkers, first and foremost, took nature alone as the object of their reflections. (2) Their pronouncements on nature are inadequate approximations compared with the knowledge of nature which later unfolded in the Platonic and Aristotelian schools, and with the Stoics and in the schools of medicine.

The Φυσικῶν δόξαι of Theophrastus became the chief source for textbooks on the history of philosophy during the age of Hellenism. These textbooks determined the interpretation of those of the early thinkers'

original texts that still survived. Out of them, too, grew the subsequent doxographical tradition in philosophy. Not just the content but also the style of this tradition formed the relationship of later thinkers to the history of thought – up to Hegel and beyond.

In about AD 510, the neo-Platonist, Simplicius, wrote a comprehensive commentary on Aristotle's *Physics*. In it he reproduces the text of Anaximander's saying, thereby preserving it for the West. He took it over from Theophrastus' Φυσικῶν δόξαι. From the time that Anaximander uttered his saying – we do not know where, or how, or to whom – until the time Simplicius inscribed it in his commentary, more than a thousand years had elapsed. Between the time of his inscription and the present lies another millennium and a half.

Can the saying of Anaximander, from the historical distance, chronologically reckoned, of two and a half thousand years still speak to us? From what authority should it speak? Only the authority of being the oldest? In themselves, the ancient and the antiquarian carry no weight. Besides, though the saying is indeed the oldest preserved in our tradition, we do not know whether it is the earliest saying of its kind in Western thought. We may surmise this provided we first think the essence of the West from out of that of which the early saying speaks.

But by what right does the early address us, presumably the latest of the latecomers to philosophy? Are we the latecomers of a history that now speeds toward its end, an end in which everything terminates in an ever more desolate ordering of uniformity? Or is there, concealed in the chronological remoteness of the saying, a historical proximity to the unspoken, an unspoken that will speak out in that which is coming?

Do we stand in the very twilight of the most monstrous transformation of the whole earth and of the time of the historical space in which it is suspended? Do we stand before the evening of the night of another dawn? Are we setting forth on a journey into the historical land of the earth's evening? Is the Land of the Evening[1] only now emerging? Will this Evening-Land, rising above Occident and Orient and transcending the European, become the place of the coming, more primordially destined, history? Are we men of today already "Western" in a sense that first arises out of our passage into the world's night? What are merely historiographically constructed philosophies of history supposed to tell us about history if they only dazzle us with a review of the material they adduce, if they explain history without ever thinking the foundations of the principles of explanation out of the essence of history, and this from out of being itself? *Are* we the latecomers

who we are? Yet are we also the forerunners of the dawn of an altogether different age which has left behind today's historiographical representations of history?

Nietzsche (from whose philosophy, all too crudely understood, Spengler calculated the demise of the West in the sense of the historical world) wrote in his *The Wanderer and His Shadow*, which appeared in 1880:

> An exalted condition of humanity is possible, one in which the Europe of nations will be lost in dark forgetfulness, but in which Europe will *live on* in thirty very old, but never antiquated, books.
>
> (Aphorism 125)

All historiography calculates what is to come from its images of the past, images which are determined by the present. Historiography is the continual destruction of the future and our historical relation to the advent of destiny. Historicism today has not only not been overcome, but is entering only now the stage of its expansion and establishment. The technical organization of the public image of the world by radio and the press (which is already struggling to keep up) is the authentic form of the dominion of historicism.

Can we, however, represent and portray the dawn of an epoch in ways other than those of historiography? Perhaps it is for us the indispensable method of bringing the historical into the present. That in no way means, however, that historiography, taken in itself, enables us to form a relation that is adequate to reach to the historical within our history.

The antiquity which conditions Anaximander's saying belongs to the dawn of the dawn of the Land of the Evening. What if, however, that very first dawn overtook the latest, overtook it, indeed, by the greatest distance? The "once" of the dawn of destiny would then come as the "once" of the latest (ἔσχατον), that is, as the departure of the long-concealed destiny of being. The being of beings gathers itself (λεγεσθαι, λογος) in the ultimacy of its destiny. The hitherto prevailing essence of being[a] disappears into its still concealed truth.[b] The history of being gathers itself in this departure. The gathering in this departure, as the gathering (λογος) of the utmost (ἔσχατον) of its hitherto prevailing essence, is the eschatology of being. As destining, being itself is inherently eschatological.

[a] First edition, 1950. Presence – the allowing of presence: the essencing-to-presence [*das An-wesende*].

[b] First edition, 1950. Clearing [*Lichtung*] of the self-concealing.

We do not, however, understand the word "eschatology" in the phrase "eschatology of being" as the title of a theological or philosophical discipline. We think of the eschatology of being in the sense in which the phenomenology of Spirit is to be thought, i.e., from within the history of being. This phenomenology itself represents a phase in the eschatology of being in as much as being gathers itself, in the extremity of its hitherto – metaphysically determined – essence, as the absolute subjectivity of the will to will.

If we are to think from out of the eschatology of being we must one day await the "once" of the dawn in the "once" of what is approaching and must today learn to ponder this "once" from out of this approach.

If we can manage, just once, to hear the saying it will speak to us no longer as a historically remote opinion. If that happened, then we would not be misled into the vain attempt to reckon historically, that is, psycho-philologically, what was really present in the past, in the man called Anaximander of Miletus, as the condition of his representation of the world. What, however, presuming we have for once heard what is said in the saying, binds us in our attempt to translate it? How do we arrive at what is said in the saying so that it will preserve our translation from arbitrariness?

We are bound to the language of the saying and we are bound to our own native language. In both respects we are essentially bound to language and to the experience of its essence. This bond is stronger and further-reaching, although less conspicuous, than the standard provided by all the philological and historical facts – which only derive their factuality from it. As long as we fail to experience this bond, every translation of the saying must come to light as something completely arbitrary. Yet even when we are bound through that which is said in the saying, not just the translation but the bond, too, retains the appearance of violence. It is as if that which is to be heard is compelled to suffer violence.

Only through a dialogue between thought and what this thoughtful saying says can it be translated. The thinking is, however, poeticizing – though not in the sense of poesy or song. The thinking of being is the primordial form of poeticizing in which, before everything else, language first becomes language, enters, that is to say, its essence. Thinking says what the truth of being dictates.[1] Thinking is the ur-poetry which precedes all poesy. But it

[1] First Edition, 1950. That is to say, thinking is saying which releases [*Entsagen*], the saying of the Event.

precedes, too, the poetic in art insofar as art's becoming an artwork happens within the realm of language. All poeticizing, in both this broader and narrower sense of the poetic is, at bottom, thinking. The poeticizing essence of thought preserves the sway of the truth of being. Because it poeticizes thoughtfully, the translation which wishes to allow the oldest saying of thinking to speak necessarily appears violent.

We shall try to translate Anaximander's saying. This requires that we bring hither [*herübersetzen*] into our German language what is said in the Greek. To this end it is necessary that, before the translating, our thinking is translated [*übersetzt*] into what is said in Greek. To make this thoughtful translation to what comes to language in the saying is to leap over a gulf. This by no means consists merely in the chronological-historical distance of two and a half millennia. The gulf is wider and deeper. To leap over it is hard, above all because we stand right on its edge. We are so close to the gulf that we do not have a run up that is adequate for the take off and for the breadth of the leap. It is easy, therefore, to fall short – if, indeed, that lack of a sufficiently solid basis allows any take off at all.

What comes to language in the saying? The question is still ambiguous and therefore imprecise. It might ask for that about which the saying says something. It might also mean that which is said itself.

More literally translated, the saying runs:

> But that from which things have their arising also gives rise to their passing away according to necessity; they give justice and pay penalty to each other for the injustice according to the ordinance of time.

The usual view is that the sentence speaks about the arising and decay of things. It specifies the nature of this process. Arising and decay return to the place from where they came. Things develop and then they decay, exhibiting thereby a kind of barter system in nature's unchanging economy. The exchange between the constructive and destructive processes is, admittedly, established only roughly as a general characteristic of nature. The motions in which resides the mutability of all things are not yet represented in their precise measure. At this point an appropriate formula for a law of motion is still lacking. The judgment of later, more progressive times, is indulgent enough not to ridicule this beginner's attempt at scientific research. It even finds it to be perfectly in order that a first attempt at the observation of nature should describe processes in things in terms of those familiar from the human sphere. This is why Anaximander's saying speaks of justice and

injustice, punishment and penalty, sin and recompense in relation to things. Moral and legal concepts infiltrate the picture of nature. Thus Theophrastus criticizes Anaximander for ποιητικωτέροις οὕτως ὀνόμασιν αὐτὰ λέγων, for speaking more poetically than is necessary. Theophrastus has in mind the words δίκη, τίσις, ἀδικία, διδόναι δίκην...

First and foremost, what we must do is to determine what the subject matter of the saying is. Only then will we be able to tell what it says about it.

From a grammatical point of view the saying consists of two sentences. The first begins: ἐξ ὧν δὲ ἡ γενεσις ἐστι τοῖς οὖσι... The topic of discussion is the ὀντα. Literally translated, τὰ ὄντα means "the being." The neuter plural names τα πολλα, "the many," in the sense of the multiplicity of beings. But τα ὀντα does not mean an arbitrary or boundless multiplicity: rather, τα παντα, the totality of beings. Hence τὰ ὄντα designates the multiplicity of beings as a whole. The second sentence begins: διδόναι γὰρ αὐτά... The αὐτά refers back to the τοῖς οὖσι of the first sentence.

The saying speaks about the manifold being. Not only things, however, belong among beings. In the fullest sense, things are not just natural things. Human beings, the things they produce, and the situations and circumstances effected and realized by human actions and omissions belong, too, among beings. And so do daemonic and divine things. All these things are not merely "also" beings, they are even more in being than mere things. The Aristotelian-Theophrastean presupposition that τὰ ὄντα are the φυσει ὀντα, natural things in the narrower sense, is completely groundless. It is, for our translation, untenable. But even the translation of τὰ ὄντα as "the things" does not suit the matter which comes to language in the saying.

If, however, the presupposition that the saying is concerned to say something about natural things fails, then so does all support for the assertion that what, strictly speaking, should be represented in the language of natural science is still interpreted in moral and legal terms. With the collapse of the presupposition that the saying strives for knowledge about the specifically demarcated realm of nature another assumption becomes invalid, namely, that at this time the ethical [*sittliche*] and the just were thought in terms of academic disciplines called "ethics" and "jurisprudence." The denial of such boundaries between disciplines does not at all mean that those early times recognized no law or ethics. If, however, our usual way of thinking within a range of disciplines (physics, ethics, philosophy of law, biology, psychology) has, here, no place, then, where boundaries between disciplines are absent, there is no possibility of boundary transgression, no possibility of

the illegitimate transfer of representations from one area to another. The absence of boundaries between disciplines does not necessarily mean, however, the boundlessness of indeterminacy and flux. On the contrary, it can well be that purely thought – free of over-simple categorization – the actual structure of the matter comes to language.

The words δίκη, ἀδικία, τίσις have a broad signification which cannot be enclosed within particular disciplines. "Broad," here, does not mean extensive in the sense of flattened or thinned out, but rather far-reaching, rich, and containing much that has been thought out. For this reason it follows that precisely these and only these words are capable of bringing to language the manifold totality in the essence of its authentic unity. For that to happen the unified totality of the manifold, with its own characteristics, must, of course, be thought purely as it is in itself.

This way of letting the manifold being come, in its unity, to essential view is anything but a kind of primitive and anthropomorphic representation.

In order to trans-late ourselves into that which comes to language in the saying we must, prior to all translating, consciously set aside all inappropriate preconceptions. For example, that the saying deals with the philosophy of nature in a way such that inappropriate notions from morality and the law are mixed into the discussion. Or that sharply separated representations taken from the specialized areas of nature, ethics, and jurisprudence are relevant to the discussion. Or, finally, that a primitive outlook still prevails in the saying which interprets the world uncritically and anthropomorphically, and therefore takes refuge in poetic expressions.

However, even this casting aside of presuppositions wherever we find them inappropriate is insufficient so long as we fail to allow ourselves to be drawn into and to listen for that which comes to language in the saying. Only from out of such listening will one succeed in having a dialogue with early Greek thinking. It belongs to such a dialogue that the conversation speaks of the same thing, indeed out of a participation in the same. According to its wording, the saying speaks of the ὄντα. It expresses what and how it is with them. Beings are spoken of in such a way that their being is expressed. Being comes to language as the being of beings.

At the summit of the completion of Western philosophy the following words are said: "To stamp becoming with the character of being – that is the *highest will to power*." Thus wrote Nietzsche in a note entitled "Recapitulation." Going by the character of the handwriting we must locate the note in the year 1885, the time at which, having completed *Zarathustra*, he planned

his great work of systematic metaphysics. "Being," as Nietzsche thinks it here, is "the eternal return of the same." It is the mode of permanence in which the will to power wills itself and secures its own presencing as the being of becoming. This is how the being of beings is expressed in the final stage of the completion of metaphysics.

Although the early aphorism of early thinking and the late aphorism of recent thinking bring to language the same, what they say is not the same. Nonetheless, if we can speak of the same being addressed from out of the different, then the fundamental condition for a thoughtful dialogue between the late and the early is automatically fulfilled.

Or does that merely seem to be the case? Does there lie concealed beneath this appearance the gulf between the language of our thinking and the language of Greek philosophy? Only if we take τὰ ὄντα to mean "the being" and εἶναι to mean nothing other than "to be" do we cross whatever gulfs there may be and – in spite of all the differences between the ages – place ourselves together with the ancient thinkers in the region of the same. This same validates for us the translation of τὰ ὄντα and εἶναι as "the being" and "to be." Or to demonstrate the unimpeachable correctness of this translation do we need first to produce as evidence a broad selection of texts from Greek philosophy? All interpretations of Greek philosophy are based already on this translation. Every dictionary gives us the fullest information to the effect that εἶναι means "to be," ἐστιν "is," ὄν "being," and τὰ ὄντα "the being."

This is how things stand. We have no intention of casting doubt on any of it. We do not question the translation of ὄν as "being," nor that of εἶναι as "to be." We ask, merely, whether in these correct translations correct thinking is occurring. We ask, merely, whether, in these most commonplace of all translations, anything at all is thought.

Let us put it to the test. Let us examine ourselves and others. Here something manifests itself: that in these correct translations everything evaporates into fluctuating and imprecise meanings. It becomes clear that the always hasty approximations of the familiar translations are not seen as an inadequacy nor do they disturb, in the slightest, scholarly research and presentation. Greater efforts are perhaps made to bring out what the Greeks may have really represented to themselves with words like θεός, ψυχη, ζωή, τύχη, χάρις, λόγος, φύσις and ἰδέα, τέχνη and ἐνέργεια. But what we fail to notice is that these and similar efforts get nowhere and fail to refer to any realm, so long as that realm of all realms, the ὄν and the εἶναι, is insufficiently clarified in its Greek essence. Scarcely, however, have we named εἶναι a "realm" than its character as a realm is represented as

universal and all-embracing *via* the logical explication of γένος and κοινόν. This grasping-together [*concipere*] in the manner of the representational concept is supposed, in advance, to be the only possible way in which to think being as such. It is still taken to be applicable when one takes refuge in the dialectic of concepts [*Begriffe*] or in the un-graspability (*Un-Begrifflichc*) of magic signs. It remains completely forgotten that the supremacy of the concept and the interpretation of thinking as conceptually grasping is based solely on the unthought – because unexperienced – essence of the ὄν and εἶναι.

In the main we thoughtlessly attribute to the words ὄν and εἶναι that which we mean by the corresponding (but unthought) words of our own language: beings and being. To be precise, we attribute to the Greek words no significance at all. We adopt them directly from whatever vague comprehensibility is lent to them by the ordinary understanding of our own language. We support the Greek words with nothing but the accommodating negligence of hasty opinion. This may do at a pinch when we read, for example, εἶναι and ἔστιν in the historical works of Thucydides or ἦν and ἔσται in Sophocles.

How is it, however, when τὰ ὄντα, ὄν and εἶναι come to sound in language as the fundamental words of thinking; not just some particular way of thinking, but rather as the key words for all Western thinking? Then an examination of the use of language in the translation reveals the following state of affairs:

It is neither clear nor firmly established what we ourselves think with the words "being" and "to be";

nor is it clear or firmly established whether what we variously mean corresponds to what the Greeks talk about with the words ὄν and εἶναι.

It is neither clear nor firmly established what ὄν and εἶναι, thought in the Greek manner, say;

nor, given this situation, can we ever conduct an examination of whether, and to what extent, our thinking corresponds to that of the Greeks.

Thus, simple relations are thoroughly confused and unthought. Within them, however, and hovering above them, a boundless chatter about being has spread itself far and wide. In conjunction with the formal correctness of the translation of ὄν and εἶναι as "being" and "to be," this continually covers over the confused state of affairs. But it is not only we of today who wander about in this confusion. All representations and presentations left to us by the philosophy of the Greeks remain in it, too, captivated for millennia. The confusion stems neither from mere philological negligence

nor from an imprecision in historical research. It arises, rather, out of the abyss of the relationship in which being[a] has appropriated the essence of Western humanity. Thus the confusion cannot be removed by creating, *via* some kind of a definition, a more precise meaning of the words ὄν and εἶναι, "being" and "to be." On the contrary, the attempt to be aware of the confusion and to bring its dogged power to a resolution may well prove to be the occasion which releases another destiny of being. The preparation of such an occasion would be reason enough to set in motion, within the abiding confusion, a dialogue with early thinking.

If we stubbornly insist on thinking Greek thought in a Greek manner, this is by no means because we intend to produce a portrait of the Greeks as a past humanity intended to be, in numerous respects, more accurate. We seek what is Greek neither for the sake of the Greeks nor for the advancement of science. We seek a clearer dialogue not for its own sake but solely for the sake of that which wishes to come to language in such a dialogue, provided it comes of its own accord. This is that same which, in different ways, is destined to concern both the Greeks and us. It is that which brings the dawn of thinking into the destiny of the West. It is as a consequence of this destiny that the Greeks first became, in the historical sense, the Greeks.

As we use the word, "Greek" designates neither an ethnic nor national, neither a cultural nor an anthropological characteristic. What is Greek is that dawn of destiny as which being itself[b] lights itself up in beings and lays claim[c] to an essence of humanity, a humanity which, as destined, receives its historical path, a path sometimes preserved in, sometimes released from, but never separated from being.

The Greek, the Christian, the modern, the global, and, in the already indicated sense, the Evening-land, we think out of a fundamental trait of being which, as the Ἀλήθεια in the Λήθη, is more concealed than revealed. But this concealing of its essence and essential origin is the trait in which being's primordial self-illumination occurs, occurs, indeed, so that thinking can precisely *not* pursue it. The being itself does not step into the light of being. The unconcealment of the being, the brightness granted it, darkens the light of being.

By revealing itself in the being, being withdraws.

[a] First edition, 1950. *As* appropriating [***als*** *er-eignen*].
[b] First edition, 1950. The Event.
[c] First edition, 1950. Custom-uniting [*Brauch-Vereignung*].

In this way, in its illuminating, being invests the being with errancy. The being happens in errancy in which it strays from being and so – to speak in the manner of princes and poets – founds error. This is the essential space of history. In it the historically essential strays past what is like being. This is why what happens historically is necessarily misinterpreted. Throughout this misinterpretation destiny waits for what will become of its seed. It brings those whom it concerns into the possibility of the destined and the un-destined. Destiny tries out its destiny. The inability of human beings to see themselves corresponds to the self-concealment of the lighting of being.

Without errancy there would be no connection from destiny to destiny, no history. Chronological distance and causal sequence belong to historiography, but not to history. When we are historical we are at neither a large nor a small distance from the Greek. But we are in errancy toward them.

By revealing itself in the being, being withdraws.

In this way being, with its truth, keeps to itself. This keeping to itself is the way it discloses itself early on. Its early sign is the Ἀ λήθεια. By bringing the being's unconcealment, it founds, for the first time, the concealment of being. Concealment remains, however, the characteristic of the refusal that keeps to itself.

This illuminating, keeping to itself with the truth of its essence, we may call the ἐποχή of being. Here, however, this word which is taken from the language of the Stoics does not mean, as it does for Husserl, the methodological setting aside of the act of thetic consciousness in objectification. The *epoche* of being belongs to being itself. We think it out of the oblivion of being.

Out of the *epoche* of being comes the epochal essence of its destining in which authentic world-history lies. Each time that being keeps to itself in its destiny, suddenly and unexpectedly, world happens. Every epoch of world-history is an epoch of errancy. The epochal essence of being belongs to the concealed temporal character of being and indicates the essence of "time"[a] thought from within being. What one may otherwise represent by this term is only the vacuity of the appearance of time derived from beings thought of as objects.

For us, however, the correlate of the epochal character of being we can experience most immediately is the ecstatic [*ekstatische*] character of *Da-sein* [being there]. The epochal essence of being appropriates the

[a] First edition, 1950. The space of temporal play [*Zeit-Spiel-Raum*] as the illumination of the self-concealing concealing.

ecstatic essence of *Da-sein*. Man's ek-sistence [*Ek-sistenz*] sustains the ecstatic thereby preserving what is epochal in being, to whose essence the *Da* [there],[a] and therefore *Da-sein*, belongs.

Epochally thought, the beginning of the epoch of being lies in what we call "the Greek." This beginning, which is itself to be thought epochally, is the dawn of the destiny in being from out of being.

Little depends on what we represent and present to ourselves from the past; but a great deal depends on the manner in which we are mindful of the destined. Can this ever happen without thinking? If it happens, however, then we abandon the claims of shortsighted opinion and open ourselves to the claim of destiny. Does this claim speak in the early saying of Anaximander?

We are not certain whether its claim speaks to our essence. It remains open to question whether the glance – and this means the lightning (Heraclitus, Fragment 64 in Diels, *Fragmente der Vorsokratiker*) – strikes into our relation to the truth of being; or whether only the weak glimmer of a storm long past casts the pallid light of its brightness into our knowledge of what has been.

Does the saying speak to us of the ὄντα in their being? Do we apprehend what it says, the εἶναι of the being? Does a lightning-glance penetrate through the confusion of errancy from what ὄντα and εἶναι say in Greek? Only in the brilliance of this glance can we trans-late ourselves into what is said in the saying so as then, in a thoughtful dialogue, to make the translation. Perhaps the confusion which permeates the use of the words ὄντα and εἶναι, the being and being, comes not so much from the fact that the language cannot say everything adequately but rather from the fact that we do not think the matter with sufficient clarity. Lessing once said: "language can express everything we think clearly." So it is up to us to watch out for the right opportunity which allows us clearly to think the matter which the saying brings to language.

We are inclined to discover the opportunity we are looking for in the saying of Anaximander. But in this case we still fail to pay attention to what the way of translation requires.

For what is necessary before interpreting the saying is to trans-late ourselves – at first without the help of the saying – to the place from which what is said in the saying comes; to, that is to say, τὰ ὄντα. This word names that of which the saying speaks, not only what it expresses. That of which it

[a] First edition, 1950. In the sense of the illumination of the self-concealing.

speaks is already, before its expression, what is spoken about by the Greek language in both its everyday and its elevated use. For this reason we must seek the opportunity which allows us to trans-late ourselves outside the saying itself, in order to discover what τὰ ὄντα, thought in the Greek way, says. Furthermore, we must at first remain outside the saying because we have not yet delineated its terms. This delineation is ultimately (first of all in the matter, that is) governed by the knowledge of what in early times was thought and thinkable in such terms – as distinct from the prevailing representations of later times.

The text quoted and translated above from Simplicius' commentary on the *Physics* has traditionally been accepted as the saying of Anaximander. However, the quotation in the commentary is not clear enough for it to be possible to say with certainty where Anaximander's saying begins and where it ends. Even today there are leading authorities on the Greek language who accept the text of the saying in the form in which it was introduced at the beginning of our reflections.

In fact, however, John Burnet, the distinguished and important scholar of Greek philosophy to whom we are indebted for the edition of Plato, already expresses doubts, in his *Early Greek Philosophy*, as to whether the Simplicius quotation begins where it is usually said to begin. In criticism of Diels, Burnet says

> Diels . . . begins the actual quotation with the words ἐξ ὧν δὲ ἡ γένεσις . . . The Greek practice of weaving quotation into the text speaks against this. It is very rare for a Greek writer to begin immediately with a literal quotation. It is, moreover, safer not to ascribe the terms γένεσις and φθορά, in the technical sense they have in Plato, to Anaximander.
>
> (Second edition, 1908. German translation, 1913, p. 43, footnote 4)

On the basis of these considerations Burnet has Anaximander's saying beginning only with κατὰ τὸ χρεών. What Burnet says about Greek quotation in general speaks in favour of excluding what precedes these words. On the other hand his remarks based on the terminological use of the words γένεσις and φθορά cannot be accepted as they stand. That γενεσις and φθορα are firmly established conceptual terms in Plato and Aristotle, and therefore become academic terms, is correct. But γενεσις and φθορα are old words, already known to Homer. Anaximander would not have used them as conceptual terms. He cannot have used them in this way since conceptual language is something necessarily foreign to him. For this first became possible with the interpretation of being as ἰδέα, after which it indeed becomes inevitable.

Nevertheless, the whole of the sentence that precedes κατὰ τὸ χρεών is, in terms of construction and sound, far more Aristotelian than archaic. The same later character is betrayed by the κατὰ τὴν τοῦ χρονου τάξιν at the end of the customarily accepted text. Whoever is persuaded to strike out the part of the text found dubious by Burnet cannot retain the usually accepted closing part either. What would therefore remain as the original saying of Anaximander is only this:

. . . κατὰ τὸ χρεών· διδόναι γὰρ αὐτὰ δίκην καὶ τίσιν ἀλλήλοις τῆς ἀδικίας.

. . . according to necessity; for they pay one another punishment and penalty for their injustice.

These are precisely the words in reference to which Theophrastus notes that Anaximander speaks in a more poetic way. Since the whole issue – one which often comes up in my lectures – is one I thought through a few years ago, I am inclined to take only these words as the immediately genuine words of Anaximander, albeit with the proviso that the preceding part of the text is not simply abandoned but is rather retained, on the basis of the strength and eloquence of its thought, as secondary testimony concerning Anaximander's thought. This requires that we understand, in particular, the words γενεσις and φθορά as they were thought in Greek, whether they be pre-conceptual words or Platonic-Aristotelian conceptual terms.

Accordingly, γενεσις in no way means the genetic in the sense of the developmental as conceived in modern times; φθορά does not mean the counter-phenomenon to development, as though it involved some kind of regression, shriveling, or wasting away. Rather, they are to be thought out of and within φυσις: as ways of self-illuminating rising and decline. Certainly one can translate γενεσις as emergence; but we must think this emergence as an escape which allows every emergent thing to rise out of concealment and come forth into unconcealment. Certainly we can translate φθορά as "passing away"; but in doing so we must think passing away as a movement which again originates in the unconcealed and departs and withdraws into concealment.

Presumably Anaximander spoke of γένεσις and φθορά. Whether he did so in the form of the traditional statement remains questionable. Nonetheless word-conjunctions as paradoxical as γίνεσις ἐστιν (as I would like to read it) and φθορα γίνεται – "coming into being *is*" and "passing away comes to be" – again suggest an ancient language. The γένεσις is the coming forth and

arriving in unconcealment. The φθορά means: the departure and descent into concealment of that which has arrived there out of unconcealment. The "coming forward into . . ." and the "going away to . . ." presence within unconcealment between the concealed and the unconcealed. They concern the arrival and departure of what has arrived.

Anaximander must have spoken of that which is named in γενεσις and φθορά. Whether he actually named τὰ ὄντα must remain open, though nothing speaks against it. The αὐτά in the second clause, in the breadth with which it speaks and as a consequence of its reference back to the κατα τὸ χρεών, can name nothing other than beings as a whole, experienced in a pre-conceptual way: τὰ πολλά, τα πάντα, "the being." We are still speaking this way with respect to τὰ ὄντα, without having clarified what ὀν and εἶναι, thought in the Greek manner, name. Yet we have in the meanwhile achieved a more open field in which to attempt this clarification.

We began with the customarily accepted text of the saying. In the preliminary review of that text we have excluded the usual presuppositions which determine its interpretation. In doing so we have received a hint as to what comes to language from γένεσις and φθορα. The saying speaks of that which, in coming forth, arrives in unconcealment and, having arrived there, withdrawing, departs.

What, however, has its essential nature in such arrival and departure we would prefer to call the coming and the going rather than the being; for we have, for a long time, been accustomed to opposing becoming and being, as if becoming were nothing, not belonging within being, which has for a long time been understood as mere perdurance. If, however, becoming *is*, then we must think being in so essential a manner that it embraces becoming not in an emptily conceptual way but rather so that being bears and molds the essence of becoming (γένεσις – φθορά) in an essential way.

Hence, whether, and with what right, we represent becoming as the transitory does not, here, require discussion. What does, rather, need to be discussed is the question of what essence of being the Greeks think when, in the realm of the ὄντα, they experience coming forth and going away as the fundamental trait of arrival.

What is it that finds expression in their language when the Greeks say τὰ ὄντα? Where is there, apart from Anaximander's saying, a guideline that would trans-late us there? Since the word in question, together with its variations ἐστιν, ἦν, ἔσται, εἶναι, speaks everywhere throughout the entire language — before, indeed, thinking specifically takes this word as its fundamental term — we must become cognizant of an opportunity

which, in terms of subject matter, time, and the realm to which it belongs, lies outside philosophy and, in every respect, precedes what thinking has to say.

We find this opportunity in Homer. In him, we possess a passage where the word comes to the fore in a more than merely lexical way. It is a passage, rather, in which what ὄντα names is brought to language poetically. Because all λεξις of the lexicographical sort presupposes the thought of the λεγόμενον, we will refrain from the futile assembly of parallel passages, a practice which, all too often, only goes to show that none of the texts have been thought through. With the help of this much-favored method it is supposed that, by shoving an unclarified passage together with other equally unclarified passages, clarity will suddenly emerge.

The passage we seek to explicate comes from the beginning of the first book of the *Iliad*, lines 68–72. It gives us an opportunity to transport ourselves over into what the Greeks name with the word ὄντα, provided we allow the poet to carry us over to the distant shore of what is being said.

Some preliminary remarks concerning the history of language are necessary with respect to what follows. These observations cannot claim to present the philological problem on which they touch adequately, still less to solve it. In Plato and Aristotle, ὄν and ὄντα confront us as conceptual words. The later terms "ontic" and "ontological" are formed from them. Linguistically, however, ὄν and ὄντα are presumably forms of the original words ἐον and ἐοντα which have somehow become abbreviated. Only in the original words is the sound still preserved with which we say ἐόν and ἐόντα. The epsilon in ἐόν and ἐόντα is the ἐ in the root of ἐσ, in ἔστιν, *est*, *esse*, and "is." In contrast, ὄν and ὄντα look like rootless participial endings, as though, by themselves, they specifically designate what we must think in those word forms called by grammarians μετοχή, *participium*; in other words, those word forms which participate in the verbal and nominal sense of a word.

Thus ὄν says "being" in the sense of *to be* a being; but ὄν also names a *being* which is. In the duality of the participial signification of ὄν there lies concealed the distinction between "being [*seiend*]" and "a being [*Seiendem*]." Thus represented, what is here set forth looks at first sight like a grammatical splitting of hairs. In truth, however, it is the enigma of being. The participle ὄν is the word for that which, in metaphysics, appears as the transcendental and the transcendent transcendence.

Archaic Greek, and so, too, Parmenides and Heraclitus, use ἐόν and ἐόντα all the time.

But ἐόν, "being [*seiend*]," is not only the singular of the participle ἐόντα, "the being [*Seiendes*]," but also names the singular as such, which, as one in its singleness, is uniquely the uniquely unifying One that precedes all number.

We might say – in an exaggerated way which nevertheless touches on the truth – that the destiny of the West rests on the translation of the word ἐόν, given that the translation [*Übersetzung*] is a crossing over [*Übersetzung*] to the truth of what comes to language in the ἐόν.

What does Homer tell us about this word? We know the situation of the Achaeans before Troy at the beginning of the *Iliad*. For nine days the plague sent by Apollo has raged in the Greek camp. At the assembly of the warriors Achilles commands Kalchas, the seer, to interpret the wrath of the god:

> ...τοῖσι δ' ἀνέστη
> Κάλχας Θεστορίδης οἰωνοπόλων ὄχ' ἄριστος
> ὃς ἤδη τά τ' ἐόντα τά τ' ἐσσόμενα πρό τ' ἐόντα
> καὶ νήεσσ' ἡγήσατ' Ἀχαιῶν Ἴλιον εἴσω
> ἣν διὰ μαντοσύνην, τήν οἱ πόρε Φοῖβος Ἀπόλλων·

According to Voss' translation:

> ...again stood up
> Calchas, Thestor's son, the wisest bird-interpreter
> Who knew what is, what will be or what once was,
> Who guided here before Troy the ships of the Acheans,
> Through the prophetic spirit granted him by Phoebus Apollo.

Before Homer allows Kalchas to speak, he designates him the seer. Someone who belongs to the realm of seers is one ὃς ἤδη..., "who knew...". ἤδη is the pluperfect of the perfect οἶδεν, he has seen. Only he who has seen genuinely sees. To see is to have seen. What is seen has arrived and remains for him in sight. A seer has always seen already. Having seen already he sees in advance. He sees the future tense out of the perfect. When the poet speaks of the seer's seeing as a having-seen he must say what the seer saw in the pluperfect: ἤδη, he had seen. What is it that has come to the seer's sight in advance? Obviously it can only be that which is present in the light that illuminates his sight. What is seen in such a seeing can only be that which, through unconcealment, comes to presence. But what comes to presence? The poet names something threefold: τα τ' ἐοντα, the being, τά τ' ἐσσόμενα, the being-becoming, προ τ' ἐοντα, the being that once was.

The first thing we gather from the poetic word is that τὰ ἐόντα is distinguished from both τὰ ἐσσόμενα and πρὸ ἐόντα. Accordingly, τὰ ἐόντα designates the being in the sense of the present. When we latecomers speak of "the present" either we mean what is "now" – representing this as something that is within time, the "now" counting as a phase within the flow of time – or we bring "present [*gegenwärtig*]" into relation to the objective [*Gegenstandigen*]. As something objective [*das Objective*] this is related to a representing subject. If, however, we want to use "present" for a more accurate comprehension of ἐοντα, then we must understand "present" from out of the essence of ἐοντα and not vice versa. But ἐόντα embraces, too, what is past and what is in the future. Both constitute a way of being a present being, namely, being an unpresently [*ungegenwärtig*] present being. Clarifying matters, the Greeks called the presently present τά παρεόντα; παρά means "alongside," that is, having arrived alongside in unconcealment. The "*gegen* [against]" in "*gegenwärtig* [present]" does not mean standing over against a subject, but rather the open region [*Gegend*] of unconcealment into and within which that which has arrived lingers [*verweilt*]. Accordingly, "present," as a trait of the ἐόντα is equivalent to: having arrived for a while within the region of unconcealment. Spoken first, and thereby emphasized, ἐοντα, which is expressly distinguished from both προεόντα and ἐσσόμενα, names, for the Greeks, that which is present insofar as, in the explicated sense, it has arrived in the while within the region of unconcealment. This coming hither is the authentic arrival, the presencing of what is authentically present. What is past and future are also present, present, that is to say, outside the region of unconcealment. The unpresently present is the absent. As such, it remains essentially related to the presently present, insofar as it either comes forth into the region of unconcealment or withdraws from it. The absent is also present and, *as* absent from it, presences in unconcealment. Both what is past and what is to come are ἐόντα. Accordingly, ἐόν means: presencing in unconcealment.

This clarification of ἐόντα reveals that within Greek experience, too, that which is present remains ambiguous, indeed necessarily so. τὰ ἐόντα means on the one hand the presently present, on the other, however, both the presently and unpresently present. However, that which is present in the broader sense must never be represented as the general concept of presence (as opposed to a particular, presently present presence), though this is the usual procedure of conceptual thinking. For, in fact, it is precisely the presently present and the unconcealment that prevails in it, which pervades the essence of the absent as that which is unpresently present.

The seer stands in the sight of what is present in its unconcealment, which at the same time has illuminated the concealment of the absent as the absent. The seer sees inasmuch as he has seen everything as something present; καί, and only on that account, νῆεσσ' ἡγήσατ', was he able to guide the Achaean ships on to Troy. He was able to do this through the God-given μαντοσύνη. The seer, ὁ μάντις, is the μαινόμενος, the madman. But what is it that constitutes the essence of this madness? The madman is beside, outside, himself. He is away. We ask: away to where? And from where? Away from the mere crush of what lies before us, of the merely presently present, and away to the absent; away to, at the same time, the presently absent, inasmuch as this is always only the arrival of something that departs. The seer is outside himself in the single breadth of the presence of that which is in every way present. Therefore, within this breadth, he is able to find his way back from the "away," back to what is present here and now, namely, the raging plague. The madness of the seer's being-away does not consist in raving, rolling the eyes or contorting the limbs. The madness of seeing is compatible with the unprepossessing quietness of bodily composure.

For the seer, everything present and absent is gathered and preserved [*gewahrt*] in *one* presencing. The old German word "*war* [was]" means preservation. It is still known to us in "*wahrnehmen* [to perceive]," that is, to take into preservation; in "*gewahren* [to become aware of]" and "*verwahren* [to keep or preserve]." We must think of *wahren* as an illuminating-gathering sheltering. Presencing preserves [*wahrt*] that which presences in unconcealment, both what is present now and what is not. The seer speaks from out of the preservation [*Wahr*] of presencing. He is the sooth-sayer [*Wahr-sager*].

Here, we think the preservation in the sense of illuminating-sheltering gathering; what shows itself here is a fundamental trait of presencing – that is, of being – that has been long concealed. One day we will learn to think our exhausted word "truth [*Wahrheit*]" from out of the protection [*Wahr*] and learn that truth is the preservation [*Wahrnis*] of being, and that being, as presence, belongs to it. Preservation as the protection of being belongs to the shepherd; a shepherd who has so little to do with bucolic idylls and nature mysticism that he can become the shepherd of being only if he remains the place-holder for the Nothing. Both are the same. Man can do both only within the disclosedness [*Ent-schlossenheit*] of *Da-sein* [being-there].

The seer is he who has already seen the totality of what presences in its presencing. In Latin *vidit*, in German "*er steht im Wissen* [he stands in knowledge]." Having seen is the essence of knowledge. In this having seen

there is always something more in play than the completion of an optical process. In the having seen, the relationship to what presences has gone behind every kind of sensory and non-sensory apprehension. What follows is that the having seen is related to the self-illuminating presencing. The seeing is determined, not by the eye but by the lighting of being. Standing within this lighting is the structure of all human senses. The essence of seeing, as having seen, is knowledge. This retains sight. It remains mindful of presencing. Knowledge is the remembrance of being. This is why Μνημοσυνη is the mother of the muses. Knowledge is not science in the modern sense. Knowledge is the thoughtful awareness of the preservation of being.

Whither have Homer's words trans-lated [*über-gesetzt*] us? To the ἐόντα. The Greeks experience the being as that which is present (whether presently so or not), present in unconcealment. Our use of "being" to translate ὄν is no longer obtuse; "to be" as the translation of εἶναι and the Greek word itself are no longer hastily employed codewords for arbitrary and vague representations of indeterminate generality.

At the same time it transpires that being, as the presencing of what is present, is already in itself truth, given that we think the essence of truth as the illuminating-sheltering gathering; that we steer clear of the later prejudice of metaphysics (these days regarded as something self-evident) that truth is a characteristic of the being or of being. Being (the word now thoughtfully spoken), εἶναι as presencing, is, in a concealed way, a characteristic of truth, though not, certainly, truth as a characteristic of divine or human knowledge, and not as a characteristic in the sense of quality. Furthermore, it has become clear that τὰ ἐόντα ambiguously names both the presently and unpresently present, the latter, understood with reference to the former, constituting the absent. The presently present, however, is not something that lies, like a severed slice, sandwiched between two absences. When that which is present stands, in advance, in seeing, everything presences together: one thing brings the others with it, another allows the other to go. That which stands presently in unconcealment stays [*weilt*] in it as the open region. That which presently stays (whiles) [*Weilende (Weilige)*] in that region comes forth into it, into unconcealment, from out of concealment. But the arrival which stays *is* what is present insofar as it is already on its way from unconcealment into concealment. The presently present stays awhile. It lingers [*verweilt*] in coming forth and going away. The stay is the transition from coming to going. What is present is what, in each case, lingers awhile. Lingering awhile, it lingers still in arrival and lingers already in departure.

What is for the time being present, the presently present, presences out of absence. This must be said precisely of whatever is truly present, which our usual mode of representation would like to segregate from all that is absent.

Τὰ ἐόντα names the unified multiplicity of whatever stays awhile. To the extent it is present in unconcealment, everything presences, in its own way, to everything else.

Finally, we gather something else from the passage in Homer: τα ἐοντα, the so-called being, in no way means natural things. In the present case, the poet uses ἐόντα to refer to the situation of the Achaeans before Troy: the anger of the god, the raging of the plague, the funeral pyres, the perplexity of the princes, and so on. Τὰ ἐόντα, in the language of Homer, is not a philosophical concept-word but rather a word that is thought and thoughtfully uttered. It does not name merely the things of nature, and does not name at all objects which are nothing but objects of human representing. Man, too, belongs to ἐόντα: he is that present being which, lighting-apprehending and so gathering, allows that which presences to presence as such in unconcealment. If, in the poetic characterization of Kalchas, what is present is thought in relation to the seeing of the seer, this means that, thought in the Greek manner, the seer, as one who has seen, is a present being who in an exceptional sense belongs to the totality of what presences. This does not, however, mean that what presences is, or is only, an object dependent on the subjectivity of the seer.

Τὰ ἐόντα, the presently and unpresently present, is the inconspicuous name of that which comes expressly to language in Anaximander's saying. The word names that which, as the still unspoken – unspoken in thinking – addresses all thought. The word names that which, whether spoken or not, henceforth lays claim to all Western thinking.

But only several decades after Anaximander, through Parmenides, did ἐόν (presencing) and εἶναι (to presence) expressly become the fundamental words of Western thinking. This, admittedly, did not happen – as the popular misconception has it – because Parmenides interprets the being "logically," proceeding from the proposition and its copula. Within Greek thinking, not even Aristotle goes that far when he thinks the being's being in terms of the κατηγορία. Aristotle took the being as something already lying before any proposition, as, that is to say, the unconcealment of what presences for a while. For Aristotle, it was not necessary to explicate ὑποκειμενον, substance, in terms of the subject of the proposition since the essence of the substance, οὐσία in the sense of παρουσια, was already manifest. And neither

did he think the presence of what is present in terms of the objectivity of the propositional object. Rather, he thought it as ἐνέργεια which, however, is separated by an abyss from the *actualitas* of the *actus purus* of medieval scholasticism.

In any case, Parmenides' ἔστιν does not mean the "is" which is the copula of the sentence. It names ἐόν, the presencing of what is present. The ἐστιν corresponds to the pure claim of being before the division into first and second οὐσια, into *existentia* and *essentia*. But in this way ἐόν is thought out of the concealed and hidden richness of the unconcealment of the ἐοντα, which was familiar to the early Greeks, without it being possible or necessary for them to experience this essential richness in all its aspects.

It is from out of the thoughtful experience of the ἐόν of the ἐόντα, nonconceptually spoken, that the fundamental words of the early thinking are said: Φυσις and Λόγος, Μοῖρα and Ἔρις, Ἀλήθεια and Ἕν. Only by means of Ἕν, which is to be thought back into the realm of the fundamental words, do ἐον and εἶναι become the explicit words for what is present. Only from out of the destiny of being, the destiny of the Ἕν, does the modern age, after essential upheavals, enter the epoch of the monadology of substance, which completes itself in the phenomenology of Spirit.

It was not Parmenides who provided the logical interpretation of being. On the contrary, it was logic – sprung from metaphysics but at the same time dominating it – which led to a state of affairs in which the essential richness of being contained in the early fundamental words, remained buried. This is what made it possible for being to assume the fatal status of being the emptiest and most universal concept.

Yet since the dawn of thinking "being" names the presencing of what is present in the sense of the lighting-sheltering gathering which is how the Λογος is thought and named. The Λόγος (λέγειν, to gather or collect) is experienced out of Ἀλήθεια, the sheltering which discloses. In the conflicted essence of Ἀλήθεια is concealed the thoughtful essence of Ἔρις and Μοῖρα, in terms of which Φύσις is at the same time named.

It is within the language of these fundamental words, words which are thought from out of the experience of presencing, that the words of Anaximander's saying speak: δίκη, τίσις, and ἀδικία.

The claim of being which speaks in these words determines the essence of philosophy. Philosophy does not arise from myth. It comes into being only out of, and in, thinking. But this thinking is the thinking of being. Thinking does not come into being. It is insofar as being presences. But the

collapse[a] of thought into the sciences and into faith is the baleful[b] destiny of being.

At the dawn of being's destiny, the being, τὰ ἐόντα, comes to language. What, from out of the measured abundance of what in this way arrives, does Anaximander's saying bring to utterance?

According to what looks to be the genuine text, the saying reads

... κατὰ τὸ χρεών· διδόναι γὰρ αὐτὰ δίκην καὶ τίσιν ἀλλήλοις τῆς ἀδικίας.

In the standard translation:

... according to necessity; for they pay one another punishment and penalty for their injustice.

The saying still consists of two clauses; of the first only the final words are preserved. We begin with the explication of the second clause.

The αὐτά refers to what is named in the previous clause. What is meant can only be τὰ ὄντα, what presences in its totality, presently and unpresently present in unconcealment. Whether or not this is expressly named by the word may, on account of the uncertainty surrounding the text, be left open. The αὐτά names everything that is present, everything that presences in the manner of staying: gods and men, temples and cities, sea and land, eagle and snake, tree and shrub, wind and light, stone and sand, day and night. The things that presence belong together in the unity of presencing in as much as each presences to the others within its duration. This multiplicity (πολλά) is not an assembly of separate objects behind which something stands, embracing them as a whole. Rather, in presencing as such there prevails the staying-with-one-another of a concealed gathering. This is why Heraclitus, catching sight of this collecting-unifying and disclosing essence within presencing, calls the Ἕν (the being's being) the Λόγος.

But first of all, how does Anaximander experience the totality of the things that presence: their having arrived to stay awhile with one another in unconcealment? What is it, basically, that runs everywhere through what is present? The last word of the saying gives the answer. It is with it that we must begin the translation. The word names the fundamental trait of what is present: ἡ ἀδικία, literally translated, injustice. But is the literal translation

[a] First edition, 1950. Collapse into beings through the oblivion of being; compare *Being and Time*.

[b] First edition, 1950. But not "bad."

faithful to the word? In other words, does the word's literal translation pay heed to what in the saying comes to language? Does the αὐτα, the totality of what is present staying awhile in unconcealment, stand before our eyes?

How is it that what presences, staying, stands in injustice? What is unjust about the thing that presences? Does it not have the right to stay awhile, from time to time, and so fulfill its presencing?

The word ἀ-δικια says, first of all, that δίκη is absent. One is accustomed to translate δικη as "right." The translations even use "penalty." If we steer clear of our judicial-moral representations, if we stick to what comes to language, then ἀδικια says that where it prevails, all is not right with things. That means, something is out of joint. But what is being referred to? The things that are present, staying. But where, in what is present, are the joints? Without joints, how can what presences be without jointure, ἄδικον, that is, out of joint?

The saying says, unambiguously, that what presences is in the ἀδικία, that is, out of joint. That, however, cannot mean that it is no longer present. But neither does it merely say that what is present is just occasionally, or perhaps with respect to some of its characteristics, out of joint. The saying says, of what is present, that, as what is present, it is out of joint. The jointure must belong to presencing as such together with the possibility of being out of joint. What presences is what stays awhile. The while presences as the transitional arrival in departure. It presences between coming hither and going away. Between this twofold absence presences the presencing of all that stays. In this "between" what stays awhile is jointed. This "between" is the jointure according to which, from arrival here to going away from here, that which stays is jointed. The presencing of what stays obtrudes in the "here" of "arrival here" and in the "away" of "going away." Presencing is, in both directions, enjoined toward absence. Presencing occurs in this jointure. What is present emerges in the coming forth and passes away in the going away; indeed, because it stays, it does both at the same time. The while happens in the jointure.

But then that which stays awhile is precisely in the jointure of its presencing and not at all, as we can now say, in the dis-jointure, not in ἀδικία. But the saying says it is. It speaks from the essential experience of ἀδικία as the fundamental trait of ἐόντα.

That which stays awhile presences as staying in the jointure which enjoins presence toward a twofold absence. Yet, as what presences, that which stays awhile – it and it alone – stays the length of its while. What has arrived may even insist on its while, solely to remain more present, in the sense of

enduring. That which stays persists in its presencing. In this way it takes itself out of its transitory while. It extends itself in a stubborn pose of persistence. It concerns itself no longer with the other things that are present. As though this were the way to stay, it becomes concerned with the permanence of its continued existence.

Presencing in the jointure of the while, that which presences, staying awhile, is disjointed. Everything that stays awhile stands in this dis-jointure [*in der Un-Fuge*]. To the presence of what presences, to the ἐόν of ἐόντα, ἀδικία belongs. Thus standing in the dis-jointure would be the essence of everything that presences. And so what would come to the fore in this saying of early thinking would be the pessimism – not to say nihilism – of the Greek experience of being.

But does the saying actually say that the essence of what presences consists in the dis-jointure? Yes and no. The saying indeed identifies the dis-jointure as the fundamental trait of what presences, yet only to say

διδόναι γὰρ αὐτὰ δίκην . . . τῆς ἀδικίας.

"They must pay penalty or damages [*Buße*]," as Nietzsche translates – "They must pay the penalty or fine [*Strafe*]" according to Diels – "for their injustice." But the saying says nothing of payment, penalty, or damages. Nor does it say that something is punishable or must be avenged (according to the opinion of those who equate vengeance with justice).

In the meantime, the thoughtlessly uttered "injustice of things" has been clarified by our thinking the essence of that which presences and stays awhile as the dis-jointure in the while. The dis-jointure consists in the fact that what stays awhile tries to have its while understood only as continuation. Thought from out of the jointure of the while, staying as persistence is insurrection on behalf of sheer endurance. In presencing as such – presencing which lets everything that presences stay in the region of unconcealment – continuance asserts itself. In this rebellious whiling, that which stays awhile insists on sheer continuation. It presences, therefore, without and against the jointure of the while. The saying does not say that everything that presences loses itself in the dis-jointure. It says, rather, that that which stays awhile with a view to dis-jointure, διδοναι δικην, gives jointure.

What does "to give" mean here? How should that which stays awhile, presences in dis-jointure, give jointure? Can it give what it does not have? If it gives anything, does it not immediately give jointure away? Whither

and how does that which presences awhile give jointure? We must ask our question more clearly, that is to say, from out of the matter itself.

How should that which presences as such give the jointure of its presencing? The giving in question can consist only in the manner of presencing. Giving is not only giving away. More primordial, is giving in the sense of conceding. Giving of this kind lets belong to another what properly belongs to him. What belongs to what presences is the jointure of the while which it enjoins in its arrival and departure. In the jointure, that which stays awhile keeps to its while. It does not strain to get away into the dis-jointure of sheer persistence. The jointure belongs to what stays awhile which, in turn, belongs in the jointure. The jointure [*Fuge*] is order [*Fug*].

Δίκη, thought out of being as presencing, is the ordering, jointure-giving order. Ἀδικία, dis-jointure, is Dis-order. It is necessary that we think this word we have writ large in a large way – from out of its full linguistic power.

That which stays awhile presences in that it lingers; all the while emerging and passing away, all the while the jointure of the transition from arrival to departure continues. This lingering persistence of the transition is the jointed continuance of what presences. It precisely does not insist on sheer persistence. It does not fall victim to dis-jointure. It overcomes dis-order. Lingering, its while allows what stays awhile to belong to its essence as to the presencing of order. The διδόναι names this "letting-belong-to."

The presencing of that which presences awhile does not consist in ἀδικία as such, not, that is, in disorder. Rather, in διδόναι δίκην . . . τῆς ἀδικίας, in the fact that in each case what presences lets order belong. The presently present is not a slice that is cut off and shoved between the unpresently present; it is present insofar as it allows itself to belong to the unpresent:

διδόναι . . . αὐτὰ δίκην . . . τῆς ἀδικίας,

they, these same beings (in surmounting it) let the order of disorder belong. The experience of the being in its being which here comes to language is neither pessimistic nor nihilistic. Nor is it optimistic. It remains tragic. But that is a presumptuous word. It is likely that we will be on the track of the essence of the tragic if, rather than trying to explain it psychologically or aesthetically, we think its essential mode of being, the being's being, by thinking the διδόναι δίκην . . . τῆς ἀδικίας.

That which presences awhile, τὰ ἐόντα, presences insofar as it lets the enjoining order belong. To whom does the order of the jointure belong and where does it belong? When and in what way does what stays awhile in

presence give order? The saying has nothing direct to say about this, not, at least, to the extent we have so far considered it. If we attend, however, to the still untranslated portion it seems to say quite unambiguously to whom or what it is directed:

διδόναι γὰρ αὐτὰ δίκην καὶ τίσιν ἀλλήλοις.

The things which stay awhile let order belong ἀλλήλοις, to one another. So we are generally accustomed to read the text. We relate the ἀλληλοις to the δίκην and τίσιν, if we represent matters clearly and explicitly as Diels does (though Nietzsche's translation skips over the whole issue). It seems to me, however, that relating the ἀλλήλοις directly to the διδοναι δικην και τίσιν is neither linguistically demanded nor, more importantly, justified by the matter itself. Hence it is from the matter itself that we must ask whether ἀλλήλοις immediately relates to δίκην, or whether it does not rather relate only to the τίσιν that immediately precedes it. The discussion here partially depends on how we translate the καί that stands between δικην and τισιν. But this depends on what τίσις says here.

One is accustomed to translate τισις as "penalty [*Buße*]." This leads us to give διδόναι the meaning of "pay." Whatever stays awhile pays penalty: it makes this payment as punishment (δικη). The court of justice is complete: not even injustice is missing, though admittedly no one is properly able to say in what it consists.

τίσις can indeed mean "penalty." It must, however, not do so since this does not name the essential and original meaning of the word. For τισις is "esteem." To esteem something means to pay heed to it and therefore find satisfaction in what is estimable in it. The essential process of esteem, the finding of satisfaction, can occur in what is good as the bestowing of favour. But with respect to what is bad it can occur as penalty. This mere explanation of the word, however, does not bring us to its matter in the saying unless we are already, as with ἀδικια and δικη, thinking out of the matter which comes to language in the saying.

According to the saying, αὐτὰ (τὰ ἐόντα), the things that stay awhile in presence, stand in dis-order. As they while they tarry. They hang on. For in the transition from arrival to departure they pass, hesitantly, through their while. They hang on: they cling to themselves. When the things that stay awhile hang on, they stubbornly follow the inclination to persist in such hanging on, indeed to insist on it. They are concerned with permanent continuance and no longer look to the δίκη, the order of the while.

But in this way everything that tarries pushes itself forward in opposition to everything else. None heeds the lingering essence of the others. The things that stay awhile are without consideration toward each other: each is dominated by the craving for persistence in the lingering presence itself, which gives rise to the craving. For this reason things that stay awhile do not just drift into sheer inconsiderateness. Inconsiderateness itself pushes them into persistence in order that they may still presence as that which presences. The totality of what presences does not disintegrate into merely inconsiderate individuals, does not dissipate itself in discontinuity. Rather, as the saying now says,

διδόναι . . τίσιν ἀλλήλοις;

they, things which stay awhile, let one thing belong to another: consideration toward each other. The translation of τίσις as consideration better captures the essential meaning of paying heed and esteeming. It is thought out of the presencing of that which stays awhile. For us, however, the word "consideration" applies too directly to human existence. τίσις, on the other hand, because it is said more essentially, applies neutrally to everything that is present: ουτα (τα ἐοντα). Our word "consideration" lacks not merely the necessary breadth but, above all, the gravity to serve as the translation of τίσις as it occurs in the saying, and as the word corresponding to δίκη, order.

Now our language possesses an old word which, interestingly enough, we moderns know only in its negative form and as a term of disparagement, as with the word *Unfug* [disorder]. This usually means for us something like inappropriate and vulgar behaviour, something perpetrated in a crude manner.

In a similar fashion we still use the word "*ruchlos* [reckless²]," meaning by it depraved and shameful: without *Ruch* [reck]. We no longer know what *Ruch* means. The Middle High German "*ruoche*" means "solicitude," "care." Care concerns itself with another so that it may remain in its essence. This concerning-itself, when thought of as what stays awhile in relation to presencing, is τισις. *Ruch* [reck]. Our word "*geruhen* [to deign]" belongs to *Ruch* and has nothing to do with *Ruhe* [rest]. "*Geruhen*" means: to esteem something, to let or allow it to be itself. What we observed with respect to "consideration," that it applies to human relationships, is true of "*ruoche*" too. But we shall take advantage of the obsolescence of the word to adopt it anew in an essential breadth and to speak of τισις, which corresponds to δίκη as order, as *Ruch* [reck].

Insofar as things which stay awhile are not entirely abandoned to the boundless fixation on aggrandizing themselves into sheerly persisting continuants – a craving which leads them to seek to expel one another from what is presently present – they let order belong, διδόναι δίκην.

Insofar as things which stay awhile give order they thereby allow, in their relationship to each other, reck to belong, in every case, each allowing it to belong to the other, διδόναι . . . καὶ τίσιν ἀλλήλοις. Only when we have thought τὰ ἐόντα as what presences, and this as the totality of what presences awhile, does ἀλλήλοις receive the significance it has in the saying: within the open region of unconcealment each tarrying thing becomes present to all the others. As long as we fail to think the τὰ ἐόντα, ἀλλήλοις remains the name of some indeterminate reciprocity within a blurred multiplicity. The more strictly we think, in ἀλλήλοις, the multiplicity of that which stays awhile, the clearer becomes the necessary relationship of ἀλλήλοις to τισιν. The more unambiguously this relation emerges, the more clearly we recognize that the διδόναι . . . τίσιν ἀλλήλοις, each giving reck to the other, is the manner in which things which stay awhile in presence occupy the while; that is to say, διδόναι δίκην, giving order. The καὶ between δικην and τίσιν is not the vacuous conjunction "and." It signifies, rather, the essential consequence. When the things that presence give order they do it by, as things that stay awhile, according each other reck. The surmounting of dis-order properly occurs through the letting-belong of reck. This means that in the ἀδικία, as the essential consequence of dis-order, lies the non-reck [*Un-Ruch*], the reckless:

διδόναι . . . αὐτὰ δίκην καὶ τίσιν ἀλλήλοις τῆς ἀδικίας

– they let order belong and thereby also reck, one for another (in surmounting) the dis-order.

Letting-belong, as the καὶ says, is something twofold. For the essence of the ἐόντα is doubly determined. The things which stay awhile come to presence from out of the jointure between approach and withdrawal. They presence in the "between" of a twofold absence. They presence in each time of their while. They presence as the presently present. With a view to their while they grant reck, and even a while, to the others. But to whom do the things that presence allow the order of the jointure to belong?

The now-explicated second clause of the saying does not answer this question. But it gives us a hint. For there remains a word we have overlooked:

διδόναι γὰρ αὐτα . . . , "belonging, namely, they allow . . . " The γὰρ, "for" or "namely," introduces a grounding. In any case, the second clause explains how what is said in the previous clause behaves as it is said.

What does the translated second clause of the saying say? Of the ἐόντα, of that which is present, it says that, as that which stays awhile, it is released into the reckless dis-order; and it tells how, as so present, it surmounts the dis-order inasmuch as it allows order and reck to belong one to another. This letting-belong is the way in which what stays awhile stays, and so presences as what is present. The second clause of the saying names what presences in the manner of its presencing. The saying speaks of the presencing of what is present. It places this in the brilliance of thought. The second clause provides the explication of the presencing of what is present.

It follows that the first clause must name presencing itself, name it, indeed, insofar as it determines that which is present as such. For only to the extent that it does this can the second clause, in its reference back to the first, explicate presence *via* that which presences. Presencing, in relation to that which is present, is always that according to which the latter presences. The first clause names that presencing "according to which . . . " Only its last three words are preserved:

. . . κατὰ τὸ χρεών·

This is translated: "according to necessity." To start with we shall leave τὸ χρεων untranslated. Yet given the explication of the second clause and the nature of its reference back to the first, two reflections are in order. First, that it names the presencing of what is present; second, that if χρεών thinks the presencing of what is present, then, somehow, the relation of presencing to what is present is thought; or it may prove otherwise, that the relation of being to the being, can only come from being, can only rest in the essence of being.

The word κατά precedes το χρεών. It means "down from above" or "from over there." It refers back to something from which something lower comes to presence, as from something higher, and as its consequent. That in reference to which the κατά is said, contains within itself an incline [*Gefälle*] along which other things have fallen out in this or that way.

But in which inclination [*Gefälle*] and in consequence of what can what presences be present as such, if not as a consequence and inclination of presencing? Things that stay awhile stay κατὰ το χρεών. However we are

to think the τὸ χρεών, the word is the earliest name for what is thought as the ἐόν of ἐόντα; τὸ χρεών is the oldest name in which thinking brings the being of beings to language.

That which stays awhile in presence presences by surmounting reckless dis-order, the ἀδικία, which itself prevails in the while as an essential possibility. The presencing of what presences *is* such a surmounting. This is accomplished when the things that stay awhile allow order to belong and thereby reck, one to another. The answer to the question of to whom the order belongs has been given. It belongs to that within which presencing, and that means surmounting, presences. Order is κατα το χρεων. At this point the essence of the χρεών begins to shine, albeit at first from a great distance. If, as the essence of presencing, το χρεων is essentially related to what is present then it must be implicit in this relation that το χρεων disposes order and with it reck. The χρεών disposes matters so that, within it, that which is present lets order and reck belong. The χρεων lets such disposing reach to that which is present and so grants it the manner of its arrival, the while of its staying awhile.

That which is present presences by surmounting the dis- of disorder, the ἀ of ἀδικία. This ἀπό in ἀδικία corresponds to the κατα of χρεών. The transitional γάρ in the second clause arches over from the one to the other.

So far, we have attempted to think the meaning of το χρεων only *via* the reference of the saying's second clause back to it, without asking about the word itself. What does τὸ χρεών mean? The first word of the saying's text we elucidate last because, according to the matter, it is the first. According to which matter? The matter of the presence of what presences. But to be the being *of* beings[a] is the matter[b] of being.

The grammatical form of the enigmatically ambiguous genitive names a genesis, an origin[c] of what is present from out of presencing. Yet, along with the essence of each of these, the essence of this origin remains hidden. Not only that, but even the relation between presence and what presences is still unthought. From earliest times it has seemed as though presence and what is present are each something for themselves. Unintentionally, presence itself became something present. Represented in terms of something present it became that which is above everything else that is present and so

[a] First edition, 1950. Reference to the ontological difference.

[b] First edition, 1950. Destiny.

[c] First edition, 1950. In the radiance of presencing, that which presences appears, *comes forth*. The radiance itself never appears!

the highest of beings that are present. As soon as presence is named, it is already represented as a present being. Fundamentally, presence as such is not distinguished from what is present. It is taken to be only the most universal and highest of present beings and hence as one of them. The essence of presence together with the difference[a] between presence and what is present remains forgotten. *The oblivion of being is oblivion to the difference between being and the being.*

But oblivion to the difference is by no means the result of a forgetfulness of thinking. Oblivion of being belongs to that essence of being which it itself conceals. It belongs so essentially to the destiny of being that the dawn of this destiny begins as the unveiling of what presences in its presence. This means: the destiny of being begins with oblivion *of* being so that being, together with its essence, its difference from the being, keeps to itself. The difference collapses. It remains forgotten. Though the two elements of the difference, that which is present and presencing, disclose themselves, they do not do so *as* different. Rather, even the early traces of the difference are extinguished through presencing, appearing as something present and emerging as the highest of beings that are present.

Oblivion to the difference with which the destiny of being begins – so as to complete itself in such destiny – is not a deficiency. Rather, it is the richest and broadest event in which the world-history of the West achieves its resolution. It is the event of metaphysics. What now *is* stands in the shadow of the destiny of oblivion of being that has already preceded it.

The difference between being and the being, however, can be experienced as something forgotten only if it is unveiled along with the presencing of what is present; only if it has left a trace, which remains preserved in the language, to which being comes. Thinking along these lines, we may surmise that the difference has shown up more in the earlier than in the later word of being – though never having been named as such. Illumination of the difference, therefore, cannot mean that the difference appears as the difference. On the contrary, it may be that the relation to what is present announces itself in presencing as such, in such a way, indeed, that presencing comes to speak *as this relation*.

The early word of being, το χρεών, names such a relation. But we would be deceiving ourselves were we to think that we could locate the difference

[a] First edition, 1950. The dif-ference [*Unter-Schied*] is infinitely different from all being, which remains being *of* the being. It is therefore inappropriate any longer to designate the difference with "*Sein* [being]" whether it is written with an "i" or with a "y."

and gain access to its essence merely by persisting with etymological dissection of the word χρεών for long enough. Only when we experience historically what has not been thought – oblivion of being – as that which is to be thought, and only when we have pondered at length what has been long experienced, may the early word perhaps speak in later recollection.

χρεών is generally translated as "necessity." By that one understands the compelling, the inescapable "it must be." But it is a mistake to focus exclusively on this secondary meaning. χρεών is derived from χραω, χράομαι. This suggests ἡ χείρ, the hand. χράω means: I handle something, reach for it, extend my hand to it. Thus, at the same time, χράω means: to place in someone's hands, to hand over and deliver, to let something belong to someone. Such a delivery is, however, of a kind which keeps the transfer in hand, and with it what is transferred.

Originally, therefore, the participial contains nothing of compulsion or "must." Just a little, however, does the word χρεών – originally or ever – denote ratification or ordering.

If we attend fully to the fact that the word must be thought from within Anaximander's saying, then it can only name what is essential in the presencing *of* what is present, together with the relation which is announced – darkly enough – in the genitive. Τὸ χρεών is thus the handing over of presencing, a handing over which hands out presencing to what is present, and therefore keeps in hand, in other words, preserves in presencing, what is present as such.

The relation to what is present that prevails in the essence of presencing is unique. It is comparable with no other relation. It belongs to the uniqueness of being itself. In order to name the essence of being, therefore, language would have to find something unique, the unique word. From this one can gather how daring is every thoughtful word that is addressed to being. Such daring is, nonetheless, not impossible since, in the most diverse ways, being speaks everywhere and always, in every language. The difficulty lies less in the discovery, in thought, of being's word than in preserving the purity of the discovered word in authentic thinking.

Anaximander says: τὸ χρεών. We venture a translation which sounds strange and can easily be misunderstood: τὸ χρεων usage [*Brauch*].

In this translation we attribute to the Greek word a meaning that is neither foreign to the word itself nor contrary to the matter discussed in the saying. Nonetheless, the translation makes strenuous demands. Even if we bear in mind that all translation in the field of thought makes such demands, it does not hide this character.

To what extent is τὸ χρεων usage? The strangeness of the translation is ameliorated by thinking our word more clearly. Generally, we understand "to use" to mean to utilize and need within the area of that to the use of which we enjoy a right. As the translation of τὸ χρεών, "usage" is not to be understood in these customary but secondary meanings. Rather, we attend to the root meaning: to use is *brucben* [to brook[3]], in Latin *frui*, in German *fruchten*, *Frucht* [to bear fruit, fruit]. We translate this freely as "to enjoy [*genessen*]" which, in its original form [*niessen*], means to take joy in something and so to have it in use. Only in its secondary meaning does "to enjoy" come to mean to consume and gobble up. We encounter what we have called the root meaning of "to use" as *frui* when Augustine says "*Quid enim est aliud quod dicimus frui, nisi praesto habere, quod diligis?*"[4] (*De moribus ecclesiae*, lib. I c. 3; cf. *De doctrina christiana*, lib. I, c. 2–4). *Frui* contains: *praesto habere*. *Praesto*, *praesitum* means in Greek ὑποκείμενον, that which already lies before us in unconcealment, the οὐσία, that which presences awhile. Accordingly, "to use" says: to let something that is present come to presence as such. *Frui*, *brucben* [to brook], to use, usage, means: to hand something over to its own essence and, as so present, to keep it in the protecting hand.

In the translation of το χρεών, usage is thought of as essential presencing in being itself. *Brucben* [to brook], *frui*, is now no longer predicated of enjoyment as human behavior; nor is it said in relation to any being whatever, even the highest (*fruitio Dei* as the *beatitudo hominis*). Rather, "usage" now designates the way in which being itself presences as the relationship to what is present which is concerned and handles it as what is present: τὸ χρεών.

Usage hands over what is present to its presencing; to, that is, its while. Usage imparts to it the portion of its while. The while, apportioned in each case to what stays, rests in the jointure which disposes what presences in the passage between the two absences (arrival and departure). The jointure of the while confines and bounds what presences as such a thing. That which presences awhile, τὸ ἐοντα, presences within its boundary (πέρας).

As the apportioning of participation in the jointure, usage is the destining decree: the disposal of order and thereby reck. Use hands out order and reck by, in advance, reserving to itself what is handed out, gathering it into itself, and sheltering it as what is present in presencing.

Usage, however, disposing order and so containing that which presences, hands out boundaries. As το χρεών, therefore, it is at the same time τὸ ἄπειρον, that which is without boundaries since its essence consists in sending the boundary of the while to that which presences awhile.

According to the tradition reported in Simplicius' commentary on Aristotle's *Physics*, Anaximander is supposed to have said that that which presences has its essential origin in that which presences without bounds: ἀρχὴ τῶν ὄντων τὸ ἄπειρον. What is without bounds is not disposed by order and reck. It is not one of the things that are present but rather τὸ χρεών.

Disposing order and reck, usage releases the present being and delivers each to its while. By doing so, however, it places it in permanent danger that its tarrying in the while will petrify into mere persistence. Thus, at the same time, usage hands presencing over into dis-order. Usage conjoins the "dis-."

For this reason what stays awhile in presence can come to presence only insofar as it allows order and reck to belong: to usage. What presences always presences κατὰ τὸ χρεών, within the lines of usage. Usage is the disposing and preserving gathering of what presences always into its tarrying presence.

The translation of τὸ χρεών as "usage" is not based on etymological or lexical considerations. The choice of the word is based, rather, on a prior *translation* of thought which tries to think the difference within the essence of being, in the destining beginning of oblivion of being. "Usage" is dictated to thinking in the experience of oblivion of being. A trace of what properly remains to be thought in the word "usage" is presumably to be found in το χρεών. This trace quickly vanishes in the destining of being which unfolds in world-history as Western metaphysics.

Thinking what presences in its presence, Anaximander's saying explicates that which is named by το χρεων. What is thought as χρεων in the saying is the first and highest thoughtful interpretation of what the Greeks experienced under the designation Μοῖρα, as the allotment of lots. Both gods and men are subordinate to Μοῖρα. Το χρεων, usage, is the handing in and handing over of everything that presences, each to its while in unconcealment.

Τὸ χρεών harbours within it the still-hidden essence of the lighting-sheltering gathering. Usage is gathering: ὁ Λογος. Out of the essence of the Λόγος, thought in this way, the essence of being is determined as the unifying One: Ἕν. Parmenides thinks this same Ἕν. He thinks the unity of this unifying One explicitly as Μοιρα (Fragment 8 in Diels, *Fragmente der Vorsokratiker*). Thought out of the essential experience of being, Μοῖρα corresponds to the Λογος of Heraclitus. The essence of Μοῖρα and Λογος is thoughtfully prefigured in Anaximander's Χρεών.

To hunt for dependencies and influences between thinkers is a misunderstanding of thought. What every thinker is dependent on is the address of being. The extent of this dependence determines the freedom from irrelevant influences. The broader the dependence the more capacious the freedom of thought; and therefore the danger that it will wander past what was once thought only, perhaps, to think the same.

We latecomers, admittedly, must, in recollection, first have thought Anaximander's saying in order to meditate on the thought of Parmenides and Heraclitus. If we have done so, then the view that the philosophy of the one is a doctrine of being, the other a doctrine of becoming is exposed as a misunderstanding.

But to think Anaximander's saying we must first of all – but then again and again – take the simple step by means of which we cross over to what that always unspoken word ἐον, ἐόντα, εἶναι says. It says: presencing in unconcealment. Still concealed in the word is this: *presencing itself brings unconcealment with it*. Unconcealment itself is presencing. They are the same, though not identical.

What is present is that which, presently and unpresently, presences in unconcealment. Along with Ἀλήθεια, which belongs to the essence of being, the Λήθη remains completely unthought and, as a consequence, "presently" and "un-presently" as well; that is to say, the area of the open region within which every being that presences arrives and in which the presencing-to-one-another of beings that stay is unfolded and delimited.

Since the being is that which, having arrived in unconcealment, presences in the manner of staying awhile, it can – lingering there – appear. Appearance is an essential consequence of presencing and of its nature. Only what appears – thinking this always from within presencing – shows visage and aspect. Only thinking which, from the beginning, has thought being in the sense of presencing in unconcealment can think the presencing of what presences as ἰδέα. Yet what stays awhile in presences stays at the same time as that which is brought forth into unconcealment. It is so brought forth when, arising out of itself, it brings itself forth. Or it is so brought forth when it is pro-duced by man. In both cases what comes forth into unconcealment is, in a certain sense, an ἔργον, thought in the Greek manner: something brought forth. The presencing of what presences, its ἔργον character thought in the light of presence, can be experienced as that which presences in brought-forth-ness. This is the presencing of what presences. The being of the being is ἐνέργεια.

This ἐνέργεια which Aristotle thinks as the fundamental character of presencing, of ἐόν, the ἰδέα which Plato thinks as the fundamental character of presencing, the Λόγος which Heraclitus thinks as the fundamental character of presencing, the Μοῖρα which Parmenides thinks as the fundamental character of presencing, the Χρέων which Anaximander thinks as what is essential in presencing, all name the same. In the concealed richness of the same lies the unity of the unifying One, the Ἕν which, in his own way, is thought by every thinker.

Meanwhile, an epoch of being soon arrives in which ἐνεργεια is translated into *actualitas*. The Greek is shut away and appears, right up to our own times, only in its Roman guise. *Actualitas* becomes reality. Reality becomes objectivity. But even this, in order to remain in its essence as objectivity, requires the character of presencing. It is the "presence" in the representation of representing. The decisive turn [*Wende*] in the destiny of being as ἐνέργεια is the transition to *actualitas*.

Could a mere translation have caused all this? But perhaps we have learned to consider what can happen in translation. The truly destining encounter of historical languages is a silent event. But in it the destining of being speaks. Into what language is the land of the evening *translated*?

We will now try to translate Anaximander's saying:

. . . κατὰ τὸ χρεών· διδόναι γὰρ αὐτὰ δίκην καὶ τίσιν ἀλλήλοις τῆς ἀδικίας.

. . . along the line of usage; for they let order and reck belong to one another (in the surmounting) of dis-order.

This translation cannot be scientifically established: nor should we have faith in it on the basis of some kind of authority. Scientific proof will not take us far enough. Faith has no place in thought. We can only reflect on the translation by thinking through the saying. Thinking, however, is the poeticizing of the truth of being in the historical dialogue between those who think.

For this reason the saying will never speak to us so long as we explain it in a merely historical and philological manner. Strangely enough, the saying first speaks to us when we lay aside the claims of our usual mode of representing, as we ask ourselves in what the confusion of today's world-destiny consists.

Man is about to hurl himself upon the entire earth and its atmosphere, to arrogate to himself the hidden working of nature in the form of energy, and to subordinate the course of history to the plans and orderings of a world

government. This same defiant man is incapable of saying simply what *is*; of saying *what* this *is*, that a thing *is*.

The totality of beings is the single object of a singular will to conquer. The simplicity of being is buried under a singular oblivion.

What mortal can fathom the abyss of this confusion? In the face of this abyss one can try to shut one's eyes. One can erect one illusion after another. The abyss does not retreat.

Theories of nature, doctrines about history, do not remove the confusion. They further confuse things until they are unrecognizable, since they themselves are nourished by the confusion which surrounds the difference between beings and being.

Is there any rescue? It comes first and only when the danger *is*. The danger *is* when being itself reaches its extremity and when the oblivion which issues from being itself turns about.[a]

But what if being, in its essence, *needs to use* [*braucht*] the essence of man? What if the essence of man rests in thinking the truth of being?

Then thinking must poeticize on the enigma of being. It brings the dawn of thought into proximity to that which is to be thought.

[a] First edition, 1950. The set-up [*das Gestell*] as the utmost oblivion and, at the same time, an intimation of the Event.

Anaximander's Saying

1 *Land des Abends.* In German, "*Abendland*," literally, "Land of the Evening," means "the West."

2 An old meaning of "reck" is "care, heed, consideration, regard."

3 In an old usage, "to brook" means "to enjoy the use of, to profit by, to hold."

4 "For what else do we mean when we say *frui* if not to have at hand something especially prized?"